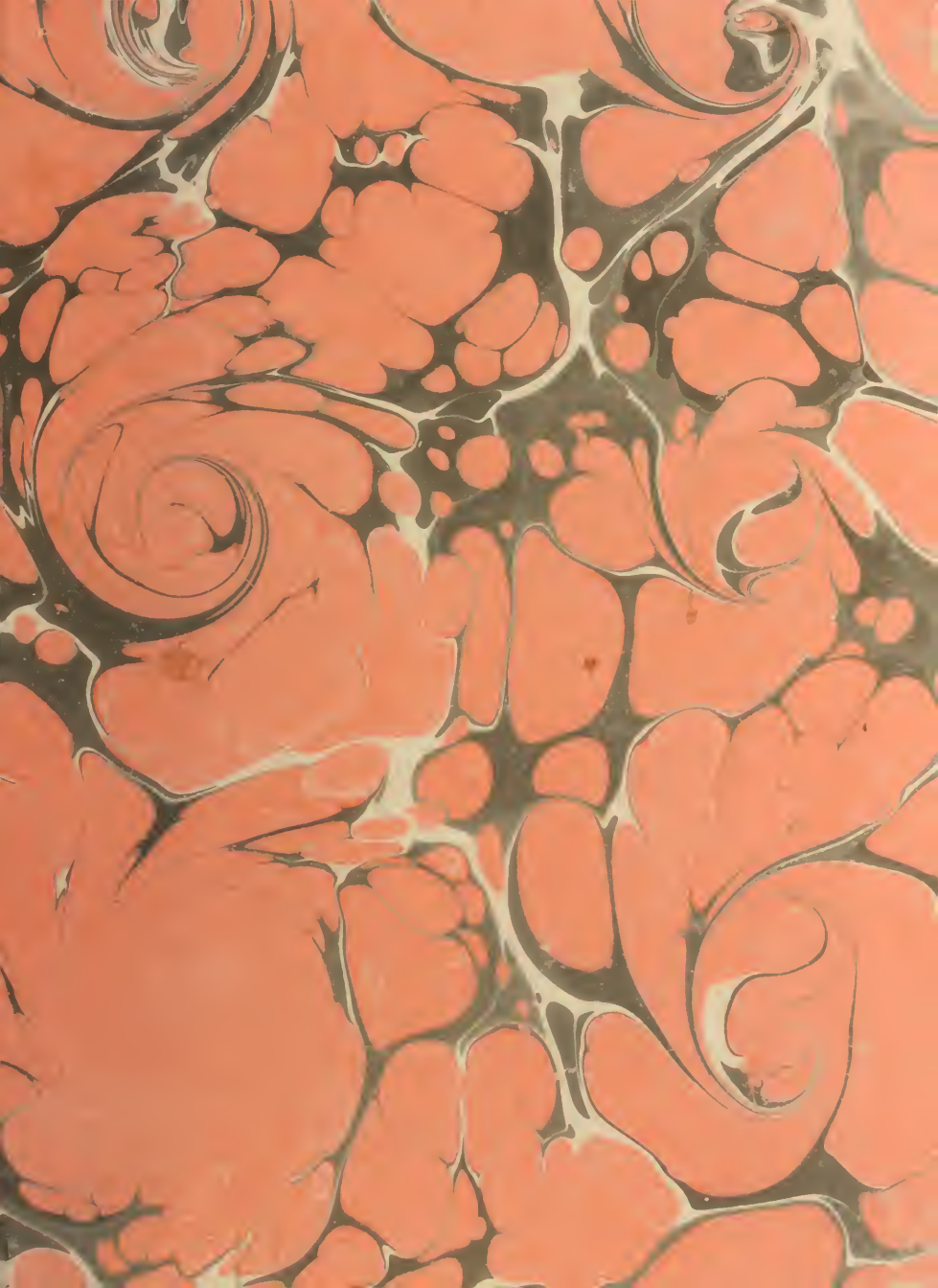




SPECIAL
COLLECTIONS

DOUGLAS
LIBRARY



QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY
AT KINGSTON

KINGSTON ONTARIO CANADA

3,030,012

Parliament-VVork,

(if they wil please to do't)

FOR

The Good of the

COMMON-WEALTH:

OR,

The *Humble Desires* of the *Well-affected*, Revived.Tender'd to the most serious Consideration of the
Parliament, Army, and others, in XX.
PROPOSALS,

- I. Liberty of *Conscience*.
- II. Punishment of *Sinn*.
- III. Putting down bad, and setting up good *Magistrates*.
- IV. Maintenance of the *poor*.
- V. Education of all *Children*, and *Youth*.
- VI. Alteration of the Law about *Theft*.
- VII Putting down of *Tythes*, and appointing a Gospel-like maintenance for good Ministers.
- VIII. Satisfying of Proprietors who have *Impropriations*.
- IX. A putting down Farmers of *Excize*, &c. and setting another way to collect it.
- X. Calling to account for all publicke monies concealed, or gotten by fraud
- XI. Regulation of *Law*, and bringing it into the *Countrey*.
- XII. What Causes should be tryed at *Westminster*, and what not.
- XIII. Reducing of the *Judges* Sallary.
- XIV. Limits to the power of *Parliaments*. and to the time of their sitting.
- XV. Rules to be observed in electing *Parliament* men.
- XVI. Their *Qualifications*
- XVII The work of the *Sherriff*. and other *Commissioners* about it.
- XVIII. The tryall of the *Elections*, by the *Council of State*.
- XIX. About Advancing of *Trade*.
- XX. About *Hospitals* and *Alms-houses*.

Concerning

Preparatory Expressing forms Anabap-
tistical chapters.

AS 911. 1659. 466



THE
EPISTLE
TO THE
READER.

THe several Particulars insisted on in this small Tract being exposed to publike view it is desired that they may not be the occasion or provoker of any to envy. The general good of the Nations being aimed at in all the Proposalls, which if it shall graciously please the Parliament to approve of, and cause to be brought to effect; which is much hoped, and longed for, especially as to the substantial parts of them; the benefit of these things will appear, and doubtless the well-affected will both now (when they are done, and hereafter have abundant cause to praise God (as well as to pray to him) for all that are in authority (or in eminent place) over them so acting for their weal and safety.

The Publisher hereof, who well knows that in the main of this short discourse he hath exprest the humble desires and hearty well-wishes of very many of the good people in this Commonwealth, hath thought fit (for several reasons which he is ready to give to any Friend that shall demand them) to desire that his Name be not made publike with it, although he hath been, and shall alway (whilst life and strength is vouchsafed) be ready faithfully to serve his Country, to the utmost hazard upon all occasions.



Long-Parliament-Work, &c.

PROPOSAL *The First.*

THat the civil and Christian Liberties (at least) of all good people respected (or comprehended) in the sixth Proposal of the Army, lately presented to the Parliament, may by Law be asserted and secured, and that with such penalties to be inflicted on such as shall presume to encroach upon, or infringe the same, as that all may be deterred for the future (whether Magistrates or others) from being injurious to any on that account; for else it's an easie thing for any that have Power in their hands, to abuse it in some degree (or other) of persecution, (if they are enabled) when they know there is not a Law to punish offences of that nature.

I I.

That none may presume to take Liberty to themselves for committing of Wickedness against the Law of God and man, in Murders, Adultery, Fornication, Swearing, Drunkenness, Oppression, Extortion, Bribery, Couzening, * and such like abominations; there may be an Act with strict penalties to command all Civil Officers of the Commonwealth (and all others) to use their utmost endeavours to bring all such as shall transgress any of the Laws made in those Cases, without fear, favour or affection to due and deserved

served Punishment; and in case it shall be (sufficiently) proved by two Witnesses, That any whomsoever have neglected their duty therein, they may be made very exemplary for such their neglects, in such manner as the Parliament shall think fit to appoint.

III.

That according to the ninth and tenth Proposals of the Army, which hath been taken into some consideration by the Parliament; Such persons may be intrusted with the management and exercise of the Government, who are of sutable spirits to the Good Cause and Interests of these Nations, and to make way for the same. That all Aiders, Assisters of, and Adherers to the late King *Charles Stuart*, his Son, or any other person or persons whatsoever, of that party, against the Parliament or Common-Wealth of *England*; and all other persons whatsoever that have made use of any Authority or Power under pretence of Law or otherwise, to deprive or abridge any of the good people of these Nations of their Christian Liberty; or have, or shall express themselves in any way mockers, scoffers, or revilers of godliness, or of the professors thereof; or are otherwise scandalous or loose in their conversations, or have not given good satisfaction of their affection and faithfulness to this Cause, may be speedily removed out of all Places of Power or Trust in the Magistracy, or other management of the public Affairs of these Nations; and that no such persons may be admitted into any such places of Power or Trust for the future. And in order hereto,

That all Charters of Cities, and Towns Corporate within this Common-Wealth, which were granted by any of the Kings, or by the late Lord Protectors, unto the said Cities and Towns-Corporate, may be speedily brought into the Parliament, to the end that they (or such of them as shall be thought necessary to be continued) may be granted and settled in the Name, and by Authority of the Parliament (as the Government is now constituted) and that in the doing thereof, the Government of such great Bodies (or Societies) of People (as are in such places) may be committed into the

the hands of persons who are fitly qualified for it; that is to say, Such as are the most eminent for godliness, faithfulness, and constancy to the good Cause and Interests of these Nations, (as aforesaid) and not be left to the Management of so many (most of which fully discovers themselves to be none of the best in several places of this Common-Wealth) and how can it be expected that Vice should be punished by such as are vicious themselves? or Vertue countenanced by those that are destitute of, and Enemies to it?

I V.

That if possible (as surely it is) a way may be found out to set all such poor to work, and to compel them to labour who are able, that they may not live in such an idle and beggarly condition as they do; and that an effectual course may be constantly taken to provide and allow sufficient maintenance for such as through age or otherwise are impotent, and not able to work, so that they may not be necessitated to beg or starve, either of them being a great shame for such a wealthy Nation as *England* to suffer; and how great a scandal doth it occasion to our Profession of Christianity? For better effecting hereof, be pleased to require the Minister of each Parish throughout the Nations, to have an inspection into the necessitous condition of the poor, and to set time apart every Week for that end, and according as he finds their needy condition to be, then constantly to provoke those as are under his charge, to discharge their duty to the utmost for their relief, and that all other Officers to whom the care of the poor is committed, may be strictly enjoined to see that sufficient maintenance be duly given to such, as occasion requires; and that from time to time diligent inquiry may be made by the several Judges in their Circuits, and at all quarter Sessions, how the Laws made in the Poors behalf are observed, & when breaches are found, the transgressors should suffer according to the Law & their demerits; that no neglect of so necessary a duty as this of relieving the distressed, may escape unpunished.

V. That

That all children and youth who are capable of learning may be put to School (both rich and poor) untill (at least) they can read the Bible ; want of learning being one great cause of much ignorance and profaneness (in the land) learning on the other hand being an apt means to direct in the performance of duty both to God and man , and doth not only capacitate such as have it oftentimes to gain a livelihood by it (when other means fail) for themselves & friends but doth also make more serviceable to the Commonwealth, and that good School-masters may be provided in every Town & Parish for that end and purpose ; & parents & masters of families, rich and poor may be inj. yued to put their children and youth to School as aforesaid , and the Constable and other officers required to see that no neglect herein be committed, especially by the poor who usually are very remiss and careless in the education of their children , which doth the more dispose them to evil (and to the manifestation of it) when grown to the age of men and women : surely this might be done without much charge, and the good of it will fully answer (in a short time) all the difficulties that are in it.

VI.

That there may be a Law for punishing of Felons, who steal above the value of thirteen pence half penny , more agreeable to the rule of Scripture and to human ty , then the Law now in being, which for a long time hath been executed on such offenders , to the taking away of life for matters of small moment ; for doth not so severe and unsuitable punishment rather harden such as are addicted to theft in that evil, then dissuade from it ; for such as are minded so to maintain themselves in an idle and wicked course of life , do in all probability often think, that if brought to tryal, through the importunity of friends, the Jury will encline to mercy, and the Judge to clemency and so they shall escape hanging, but if not they resolve to have (according to the old proverb) *A short life and a sw. et,* and regard not to think they shall come to such an end,

concluding that but few will be so rigorous as to take away their lives for a little monies or goods, or that they dare not do it; and if sometimes they escape the extremity of the Law; they flatter themselves with thinking of escaping always. Now oh that it might please the Parliament to annul and make void that harsh un-Scripture like and unequal law of putting to death for theft, and instead thereof to make a law that it may be most severely punished according to the degrees and manner of it (not taking away life at any hand) but compelling those that are able to make restitution, as Scripture doth direct, *Exod.* 22.1,2,3, 4, 7. but for those that are not able to restore, they may be kept close to work (if able) in houses of correction for a competent time according to the offence committed, or otherwise serve, be sold (or kept in prison) and doubtless this course if taken would more deter from stealing, then the way now practized; surely mans law should be as conform'd to Gods law as may be; and if they were so particularly in this case of theft, it would be more for the common good of the Nations both here and hereafter, when an account must be given at Gods tribunal for all deeds done in the body, and then Law-makers and law maintainers, as well as law-breakers, must submit to the just and righteous sentence of their Judge; and how the inflicting of death for theft unrepented of, will or can be justified, we believe none can manifest, but the contrary may easily be proved both by Scripture and sufficient reason, if any desire it.

VII.

That although its most requisite that a godly, faithful and painful Gospel-preaching-Ministry, be every where encouraged, countenanced and maintained, as in the seventh proposal of the Army, yet it is most humbly and earnestly desired, as it was formerly by the Army and many other well affected people of this Commonwealth; that the way of doing it may be altered from what it now is, Tythes being most apparently found to be very contentious and burthensome; extremity of the Law as to treble damages

damages being much made use of, and the paying of Tythes in kind in some respects in many places in stead of being the tenth part amounts to the fifth (or thereabouts) and the payment of them being much scrupled (and that not altogether without good ground) by the consciences of many good people, as not being a Gospel-maintenance, who are necessitated either to pay them against conscience, or else to run the hazard of undoing (almost) by enduring the execution of the Law, when the covetousness or envy of any will prompt them to exact the benefit (of that (harsh) law) of treble damages, and thereby also such Ministers, using such severity do occasion much dishonor, to the name of Christ in rendering the Gospel (in Scripture called glad tidings) to the poor very burthensome and greivous exactions; and surely if this un-gospel and Jewish like way were put to an end, and some other settled, much more consonant to the Gospel-rule, it would give great satisfaction, and render the Ministry more acceptable to the people, and their profession and enjoynments would be much more comfortable to themselves and their friends; but here let there be no mistake in any, to think that such as are ignorant of the Gospel, scandalous and insufficient are at all desired to be encouraged and maintained, nay let not such be suffered to continue in the publike exercise of their calling or profession to deceive and destroy the souls of the people and their own together, but let them betake themselves to employments for a livelihood, more expedient and safe for them.

VIII.

That all impropriate Tythes which belong not to the Ministers, but to other persons may be (still) paid as formerly, till a course can be likewise found out for taking of them away by giving satisfaction to the proprietors either by the supream authority of the Nation or by the people (who pay them) their agreeing with the owners about them in a way of purchase or otherwise.

IX.

That whereas the Farming of the Excize, Customs Post-
B
age

age of Letters, &c. have been found to occasion much grievance and many complaints from the people, who (for filthy lucre's sake) have been rigorously dealt withal in many places of the Nation (as might easily be made appear) by the Farmers, especially of the Excise, who being by Law impowered to act as Commissioners, and so made Judges in their own causes, (a thing both unreasonable, and heretofore unusual) do ordinarily exact forfeitures from such as are either ignorant of or mistake the Law, & so have not only paid away their gains, but have been so impoverished and perplexed, that they have often left Brewing, though it be the way of their livelihood, and thereby have been made incapable of enjoying a comfortable subsistence; and how easie is it to make them suffer unjustly, if persons will swear falsely, which how many are ready to do for money, who make not conscience of an oath? And how needlessly troublesome are the searchers many times, in raising and disturbing the Brewers & their Families, who refuse to compound (at great Rates) with them, that they may (if possible) charge them (right or wrong) with making false Entries, and so make them lyable to the great penalty of the Act, and recover the same into their purses, by which (or like means) how exceedingly have many of the Farmers been enriched, and the people wonderfully enraged both against the Law and Law-makers, as well as against the Executioners of it? Now for remedy hereof, and that the said Excise and Customs, &c. may be improved for the benefit of the Common-Wealth, free from such oppressions: It is humbly proposed to consideration, That the Justices of Peace in every County may when they know what proportion is charg'd on every County, (in which for a rule, regard may be had to what the Farmers have paid yeerly) allot or appoint (as righteously as they can) what is to be paid by the severall Cities and Towns, and other places within their Jurisdiction; and when every City, Towne, or other place, doth know their particnlar charge, then two of the neighbouring Justices, with the Chief MAGISTRATE, or other civil Officers may once a year, or every six months,

(du-

(during the time) they think best, to charge every particular House with, Law is obliged to pay (according to Right and Equity) only from the whole within their bounds, to take order that the full sum charged on each City or Town, (or other place) may be answered and satisfied; and it is not much doubted, (if at all) but that the Justices would once or twice in a year act in this business for the great good and ease of their neighbours; and without any doubt at all the people will chearfully, and much more easily raise the Tax, and account themselves much obliged to have the business so ordered, and that a Collector may be appointed in every City & Town, & a Receiver-General in every County to take and pay the whole to the Parliaments Treasurers, as they shall direct and order; Certainly all places may have the charge which is imposed on them, raised by their own Officers and Neighbours, who will better understand how equally to divide or proportion the same, then such as are strangers, and do undoubtedly farm it more to raise great estates to themselves, if they can, (as divers have done) then to serve the Common-Wealth by such an undertaking.

X

That in every County three or five of good integrity, (who have not any of the publike money in their hands to give an account of) may be appointed as Commissioners speedily to call to a strict account all manner of persons as Committees, Receivers, and Collectors, and others who have received any of the publike Monies; and that the said Commissioners may (as speedily as is possible) return the Names, and the places of abode of all such as have any of the publike money in their hands, and likewise what sums they have, to the Parliament or Council of State, or to such as shall be impowered to receive and report the same, to the end that an effectual course may be taken that all concealed money, or whatever hath been gotten unjustly, by fraud or otherwise, may be recovered as the Parliament shall appoint, to serve the publike use in this time of necessity, and to help pay the Nations Debts; and let the said Commissio-

ners be sworn to discharge their Trust in the matter with all diligence and faithfulness.

XI.

That in pursuance of the second Proposal of the Army lately presented to the Parliament concerning regulation of Law, and Courts of Justice and Equity, as that they may be a protection, and not vexatious or oppressive to the People of these Nations.

It is humbly desired, That all ordinary matters of controverſie or difference which doth or may happen to ariſe between perſon & perſon, may be heard & determin'd in the ſeveral reſpective Counties where the people live, or rather in the Hundred where they are committed or ariſe; without any Appeal, but to a Parliament when it ſits, or otherwiſe to the Council of State; and that they may be monthly judged by twelve men of free and honeſt condition, choſen by themſelves; with their grave or chief Officer amongſt them, and that they may ſwear to judge every mans cauſe aright, without fear, favour, or affection; and that there may be a publike Office in every County to regiſter all Leaſes made for any Land in that County; and alſo all Conveyances whatſoever, and all Charges upon the Lands, all Bonds and Contracts of any value, that ſo it may readily be known in whom the intereſt of Land remains, and what incumbrances lye upon it; & every Eſtate or Charge not entered there, to be void in Law: And that the Country have the chuiſing of their Regiſters in their reſpective Counties once a year, upon a fixed day, and that they have plain Rules and Limitations made by Authority of Parliament, and ſevere penaltys inflicted for tranſgreſſing of them: And that in caſe of Appeals, (as aforeſaid) a Committee may be appointed to judge what caſes are needful for to be taken cognizance of, either by the Parliament or Council, and what not, and to put a period thereto, if they can; or otherwiſe to certifie the matter to the one or the other, for the Complainants obtaining final judgement in the caſe from the one or other of them, whom it may happen to come before

That

That it may be declared what Cases or Actions may be brought to be judged by the Courts at *Westminster*, and what not; and it is humbly and earnestly desired for the general good of the Common-Wealth, That no more then what there is an absolute necessity for, may be brought to tryal thither, by which means the people will be freed from much pain in travel, and from great expences in the prosecution of their business: Oh that this might be so considered of, as to be speedily granted, notwithstanding all the endeavours which most probably the Lawyers (for their advantage sake) will make to the contrary.

XIII.

That the Judges which are employed in the service of the Common-Wealth, may for their Salaries have onely five hundred pounds *per annum*, each Judge, for discharge of their duty; and it is hoped that (since there have been such great Debts contracted in the time of the late Protectors Government, when they (as is informed) had doubled the sum above-mentioned, (if not more) and the Nation having been so much impoverished by the Wars & long payments) they will be well contented with such a Sallary, being as much as (it is credibly reported) was their allowance in the Kings dayes; and they cannot but say (if they will speak the truth) the Nation was not then in so low a condition by much, as now it is, nor at such great expences.

XIV.

That such limits and bounds may be set to the Power of the present and all future Representatives of the people, as likewise to the time of their sitting in Parliament, that they may be in a capacity to govern and preserve the people, whom from time to time they represent, to assert and secure their Civill and Christian Liberties, to make War and Peace as just occasion is, and to act in all other things for their weal and safety, and not otherwise; and this for prevention of such inconveniences as will necessarily arise, if a perpetual and unlimited power should be exercised, and remain in any Parliament, as formerly was incident to the Government when a King or other single person did bear the sway in these Nations; it may be accounted,

ed too much presumption to propose what time this or any other Parliament shall sit, or how large or little their power shall be, as to the particulars of it; and therefore the whole is humbly submitted to this Parliaments grave and timely consideration, hoping they will do these necessary works in convenient time.

X V.

That such qualifications and rules may be agreed on, acted, and declared in words that are the most plain, and easy to be understood, whereunto the people should by penalty be enjoined to yeeld obedience at all times in the Election of their Representatives, and under this Head it is humbly and earnestly desired that such as have forfeited their freedoms to elect, and of being elected to serve in Parliament, by their voluntary aiding, assisting, or abetting any of the late Wars, which were raised by the King, his Son, or their Adherents against the Parliament or other government of the said Commonwealth, may for ever be disabled from electing, or being elected, to the end the publike peace may not again be disturbed, through the endeavours of any so affected, which most probably they will be labouring after, in pursuance of their Malignant principles, if they be but admitted to share in the Legislative power with those as subdued them, it being very incident to persons when power is in their hands to take advantages for being revenged on such as have not only subdued them, but caused them to raise and pay great sums of money out of their Estates for their Delinquency, the which was done by them that they might possess the rest, but certainly it cannot be rationally expected, nor was it so conditioned by the Parliament or their Committees as we know of; That upon paying their Compositions they should be fully restored to the same or like condition as they were before the Wars, as to the power of electing, or of being elected for the end aforesaid, except by some good service done for the Commonwealth they have demonstrated themselves to be thoroughly converted in Judgment and affected from the error of their former evil ways.

That such only may be chosen to be Representers of the people in Parliament as are generally reputed for men fearing God, of good conversation and of self-denying publike spirits, and so suitably disposed to seek the preservation and welfare of the Common-wealth, and that they may not be despised for youth and accounted weak in Judgment, it seems necessary that they be at least aged one and twenty years, or rather twenty five.

XVII.

That the Sheriff in every County, and the chief Magistrate in every City, and Town Corporate, and two or four Commissioners, (the best that can be found) joyned vwith them may take special care that none appear to elect, or to be elected, but only such as are qualified for it, and if any other notwithstanding shall presume to put themselves on that vwork, effectuall course may be taken with them to cause them to pay their Forfeitures according as by Law they shall be required, and the Commissioners as vwell as the Sheriffs and Magistrates to sign the Returns.

XVIII.

That the Council of State may have full power established in them by Law, to call all such Sheriffs, Magistrates and Commissioners to account that shall neglect their duty therein, and withall according to the Law for regulating of Elections, as aforesaid, they may question any of the Elected, and where they finde them not chosen according to the Law provided in that case to reject or put them by from serving as Members in Parliament; and this to be constantly practised as the best way for admission of Members, or for excluding them from sitting; and much trouble and other inconveniencies will be avoyded which are like to occur, if the Parliament themselves at first coming together, should be the (only) Approvers or Excluders of Persons; but if the Sheriff and the aforesaid Commissioners perform their work answerable to the foregoing rule, there will be none of this kinde of trouble to the Council of State at all.

XIX.

That a Committee may be speedily appointed, and from
time

time to time continued to consider of, and endeavour the advance of trade what lyeth in them, and that a constant respect may be had thereto in the making of war and peace at all times, it being of so much concernment, towards the prosperity of these Nations, and next to the safety of them, should be taken care of.

XX.

That all Donations of any and every Founder of Hospitals and Alms-houses, and of such as have given any Estate to such charitable uses, may be onely made use of for future time exactly to answer the ends of the Doners, and to fulfill their Wills in the matter, that so those to whom of right the benefit of them belongs, may not be unjustly put from it, as in several places they have been, through the corruption of the Officers or Overseers of such places; and surely it is in justice (if not theft) in a high nature, to dispose of that to one, which was by those that gave it, assigned to another; and when such as survive, and are charitably minded on such an account do observe the wrong or injustice done in such cases, how are they discouraged from such like works of Charity, when they see the charity of others so abominably abused before their eyes?

POSTSCRIPT.

M Any other things are most necessary to be done, as settling of the Militia of these Nations in the hands of such as are of known fidelity, and thoroughly resolved, faithfully to preserve and maintain the publique and good interest of the Commonwealth as it now stand, and the rasing of the debts, especially to the Army and Nav, with all possible expedition, according to the late Votes of Parliament, and many ways might be proposed how to do it, but it being informed th. the Parliament are resolved to go through with that, and other good things, no more is thought meet for the present to be added, save most earnestly to intreat all persons, especially those who have been instrumental to invite the Parliament to sit, that they be very sober, and wait on the Lord with patience, seeking to him for counsel and his blessing on them, that they may go on in the work of their generation, without any other hasty or unwarrantable interruption; a thing most dangerous, and not to be adventured on until a most palpable and great necessity doth call for it; which we trust the Lord will in much mercy prevent. Amen, Amen.

